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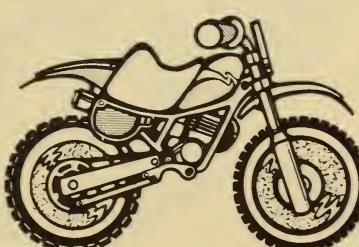
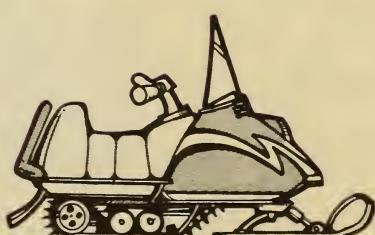
# **TREAD LIGHTLY**

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## in Nebraska

Reserve  
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1989



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

## Rocky Mountain Region



PREPARED BY  
Forest Service

## MOTOR VEHICLES ON WILD LANDS

They're a real challenge? You know that.

Your new dirt bike seems to rear up and paw the ground as you sight a steep hillside.

Ol'Blue, with those 4 new knobbies, will take you all the way to Lost Lake on that abandoned logging trail.

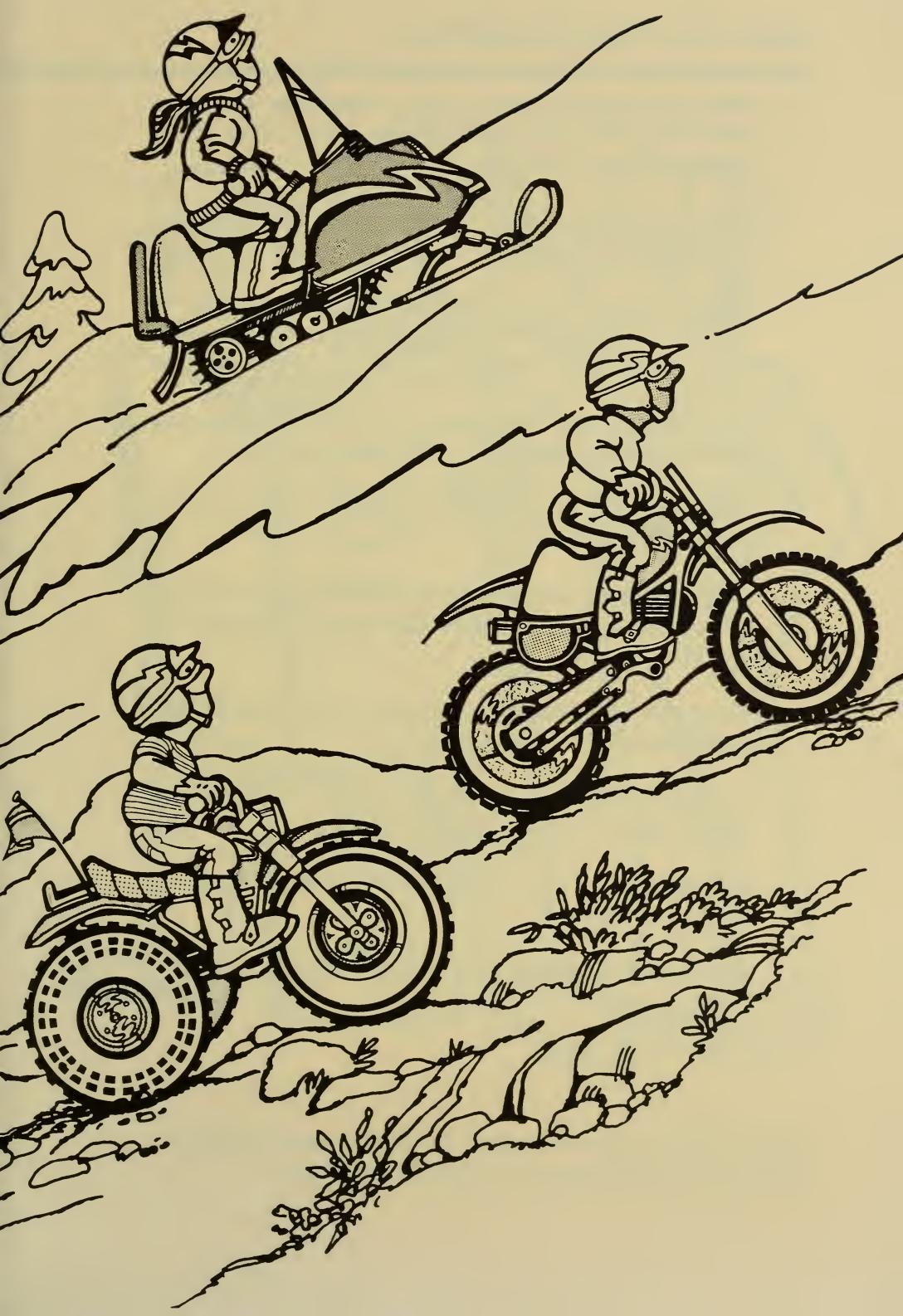
Can anything stop you when the snow is deep and packed and your snowmobile is in perfect running condition?

How about those all terrain vehicles (ATV's)? Looks like they'll go anywhere winter or summer!

These challenges draw thousands of people to National Forests and other wild lands. It's great fun!

**BUT WAIT!** Before you strike out, think about another challenge--your responsibility to TREAD LIGHTLY and protect the environment you enjoy. Here are challenges that will truly test your skill.





## HOW TO TREAD LIGHTLY

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**Become informed.** Obtain maps, regulations and other information from the Forest Service or from other public land agencies. Learn the rules and follow them.

**Avoid** running over young trees, shrubs, and grasses--damaging or killing them.

**Stay off** soft, wet roads and trails readily torn up by vehicles (particularly during hunting seasons). Repairing the damage is expensive.

**Travel around** meadows, steep hillsides, or streambanks and lakeshores easily scarred by churning wheels.

**Resist** the urge to pioneer a new road or trail, or to cut across a switchback.

**Stay away** from wild animals that are rearing young or suffering from food shortage. Stress can sap scarce energy reserves.

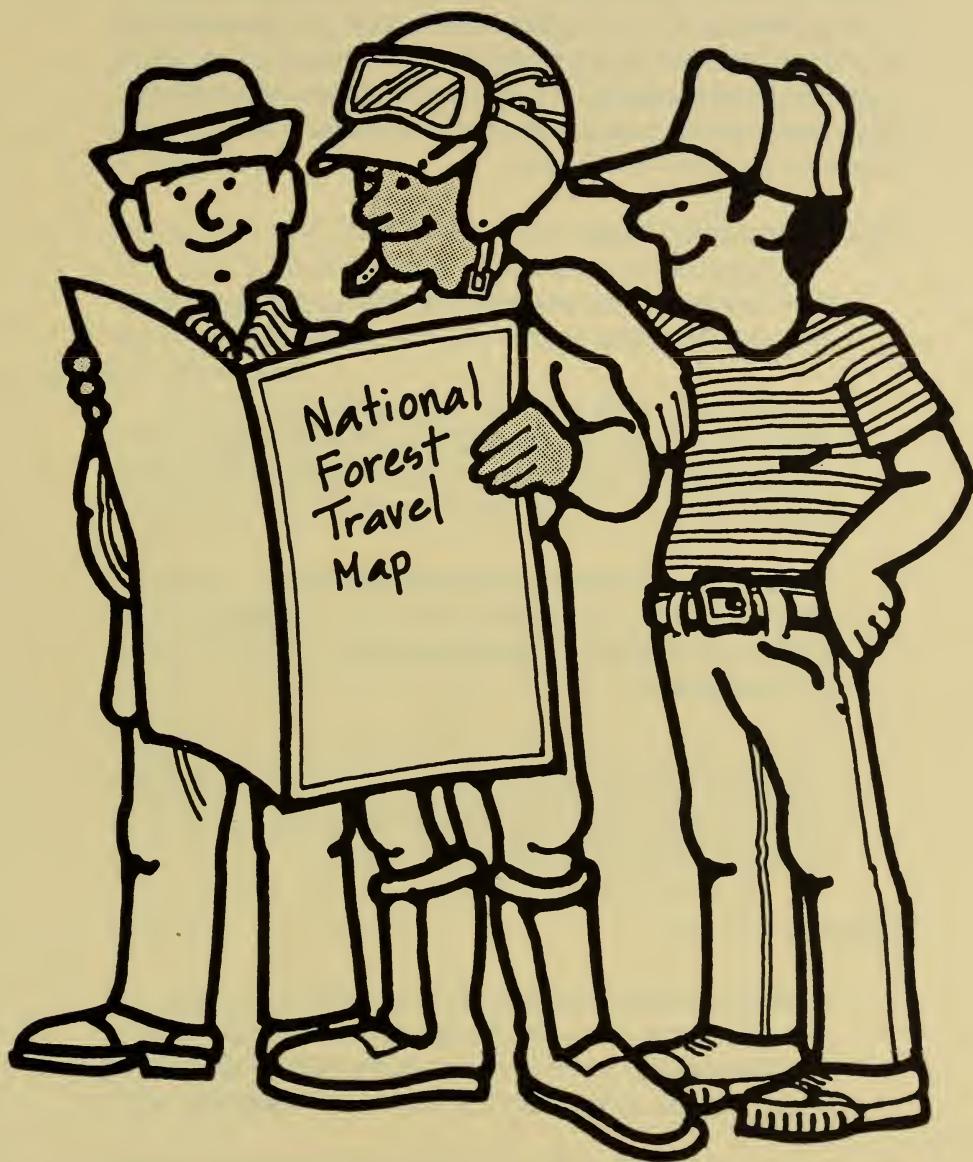
**Obey** gate closures and regulatory signs. Vandalism costs tax dollars.

**Stay out** of Wildernesses. They're closed to all vehicles. Know where the boundaries are.

**Get permission** to travel across private land. Respect landowner rights.

**Spark Arrester** must be on the vehicle along with a working muffler.

Future opportunities for exciting travel with your recreation vehicle are in your hands, so--**TREAD LIGHTLY!**



## COMMON SITUATIONS

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National Forests offer maps showing roads and trails throughout each forest. Contact the Forest or District Office to find out whether or not a trail or road will be closed. Other agencies provide similar information for lands they manage. Signs and barriers also guide you. The following are common situations you may encounter.

### **Open Most of the Time**

Main roads, unless wet and soft. These are excellent snowmobile routes if they are not plowed during winter.

Logging and other primitive roads when dry. These offer challenges for 4-wheel drives, dirt bikes, and ATV's. Snowmobilers find them fun too, unless they are open only to cross country skiers.

Trails outside Wildernesses. Some are open only to foot, horse, or cross country ski travel. Others are open to trail machines winter and summer, but NOT to full-size 4-wheel drives.

Gentle, open countryside. An occasional 4-wheel drive or ATV all do little harm IF the ground is DRY. Frequent vehicle travel may be stopped, however, to prevent creation of unwanted roads and trails.

### **Closed Part Time**

Wildlife rearing areas. Tracts, such as elk calving grounds, may be closed in the spring. Disturbance at this time can drive animals from important habitat. Vehicle travel may be allowed during the rest of the year.

Wet, soft roads and trails (outside Wildernesses). These routes are sometimes closed during spring thaw or fall snow storms. Though it's fun to test vehicle power in the mud, the resulting damage costs tax dollars for repairs. Normal travel is resumed when surfaces dry out.

Wildlife winter habitat. Wintering areas may be off limits, particularly when food is scarce late in the season. Snowmobiles and ATV's disturb weakened animals, forcing them to use limited energy reserves. Later, as animals move to summer feeding areas, vehicle travel is resumed.

Resource roads. Narrow mountain roads are closed from time to time to prevent accidents when logging, oil drilling, or mining traffic is heavy.

### **Closed Year-Round**

Wilderness. All motorized (and mechanical) vehicles are barred by law. Foot or horseback travel affords visitors a frontier experience.

Meadows, new forests, steep hillsides, streambanks, and lakeshores. Vehicle travel is excluded to protect delicate meadow plants and young trees, grasses and shrubs; and to prevent scars, soil erosion, and water pollution.

Roads and trails "put to bed." These may be resource roads no longer used for logging, mining, etc.; or steep trails replaced by easier ones. They are smoothed to conform with the land, blocked, and planted with vegetation--"put to bed."

Habitat for endangered wildlife. The habitat, or home, for threatened and endangered species like grizzly bears may be closed to prevent disturbance and help these animals re-establish themselves.

**NOTE:** If your organization is planning an event, or wants to establish routes for recreation vehicle travel, contact the local land manager or owner. Through cooperation, projects may be organized with minimal damage to the environment.

# NEBRASKA'S NATIONAL FORESTS



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### National Forests

National Forest and Grassland Maps provide detailed information showing roads, trails and areas. Maps cost \$2. Contact Forest Supervisor Offices nearest your areas of interest.

Nebraska National Forest  
270 Pine Street  
Chadron, NE 69337  
308-432-3367

Samuel R. McKelvie National Forest  
H.C. 74 Box 10  
Nenzel, NE 69219  
(402) 823-4154

Buffalo Gap National Grassland  
14th & Galveston, HCR 52, Box 200  
Hot Springs, SD 57747-9610  
(605) 745-4107

Bessey Nursery  
P.O. Box 38  
Halsey, NE 69142  
(303) 533-2257

## **Other Public Lands**

Contact these agencies for information about travel on public lands under their management.

Bureau of Land Management  
Wyoming State Office  
2515 Warren Avenue  
P.O. Box 1828  
Cheyenne, WY 82003  
(307) 772-2334

Nebraska Game & Parks  
Commission  
P.O. Box 30370  
2200 N. 33rd  
Lincoln, NB 68503  
402-464-0641

Parks and Outdoor Recreation  
P.O. Box 30370  
Lincoln, NB 68503  
402-464-0641

## **Private Lands**

Contact the owners for permission to travel on private land. You may have to ask around to locate them. Carefully follow their instructions. If you do, you'll win friends and future access. If you don't, everyone will be closed out.

## **I PLEDGE TO TREAD LIGHTLY BY-**

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**T**raveling only where motorized vehicles are permitted.

**R**especting the rights of hikers, skiers, campers, and others to enjoy their activities undisturbed.

**E**ducating myself by obtaining maps and regulations from public agencies, complying with signs and barriers, and asking owner's permission to cross private property.

**A**voiding streams lakeshores, meadows, muddy roads and trails, steep hillsides, and wildlife and livestock.

**D**riving responsibly to protect the environment and preserve opportunities to enjoy my vehicle on wild lands.

Potential damage to our natural environment on National Forest lands is intensified due to the increasing popularity of 4-wheeling. Potential damage may occur to soil, water, wildlife, visual and solitude components on the forest(s). Tread Lightly is a program developed to educate and inform forest users on how to enjoy 4-wheeling without damaging the resources or negatively affecting others enjoyment of public lands.

Accept a challenge that will truly test your skills and follow the Tread Lightly Pledge. It is your responsibility to Tread Lightly and protect the environment for your enjoyment now and for future generations. Further information on the Tread Lightly program can be contacted through your nearest U.S. Forest Service office.

## **FOR A SAFE TRIP**

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Know the operating limitations of your vehicle. Keep it in good repair.

Know your own limitations in handling the vehicle.

Carry emergency repair equipment as well as food and warm clothes.

Wear proper safety clothes.

Supervise young drivers.

Ask vehicle dealers, associations and clubs about safety classes and information.



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